

ASHEVILLE TRANSIT COMMISSION

Meeting Agenda

November 18, 2009, 4:30-6:30

Location: Downtown Fire Station on City/County Plaza

4:30 – Meeting Opening

- Agenda amendments
- Explanation of Public Comment Standards and Opportunities
- Review meeting minutes from October 2009
- Welcome Public – Introductions and Pre-Meeting Public Comment (This item is limited to 15 minutes; members of the public wishing to schedule a presentation at the beginning of the meeting must contact a member of the Transit Commission prior to the meeting date.)

4:45 – Implementation of the Transit Master Plan - Ken Putnam, Transportation Department Director

5:05 - Art in Transit: Bus Wrap Project - Diane Ruggiero, Superintendent of Cultural Arts

5:20 - Update from Transit Commission Members Work and New Business

- Meetings and Introductions with New City Council Candidates
- New Transit Commission Members
- New Transit Commission Member Training Program
- Volunteer Program
- Information Releases and Potential Partnerships
- Transit Commission Presentation Schedule

5:55 - Updates from Staff:

- Status of Inter-City Routes
- Consolidation Study

6:00– Meeting Summary

- December Meeting Date (December 9, 2009)
- Announcements, events, transit commission members involvement related to transit
- Solicitation for request from public to be incorporated into next month's meeting agenda
- Discuss agenda items for next meeting December 9, 2009.
- Close



ASHEVILLE TRANSIT COMMISSION Meeting Agenda

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Location: Downtown Fire Station on City/County Plaza

4:30 – Meeting Opening

1. Agenda amendments
Commission members are given the opportunity to rearrange and/or add agenda items.
2. Explanation of Public Comment Standards and Opportunities
Members of the public are encouraged to attend meetings of the Transit Commission, but their participation is governed the Commission's Rules of Procedure, which will be outlined here
3. Review meeting minutes from October 2009
Commission members are given the opportunity to correct minutes from their previous meeting before voting to accept them.
4. Welcome Public – Introductions and Pre-Meeting Public Comment (15 mins)
The Transit Commission has adopted the tradition of asking each person present to introduce themselves, announce their affiliation and reason for attending today's meeting.

4:45 – Implementation of the Transit Master Plan - Ken Putnam, Transportation Department Director

The City Council last month voted to support the Transit Master Plan, which calls for significant service improvements including new routes, Sunday service and more frequent runs on popular corridors. The council delayed in-depth discussion of funding for the recommendations. Ken Putnam will review the city's strategy for putting the TMP in place.

5:05 - Art in Transit: Bus Wrap Project - Diane Ruggiero, Superintendent of Cultural Arts

Diane Ruggiero will update the Commission on plans to beautify the city's buses and raise funds for the system by hosting a competition to design an overall bus wrap that would be applied to a limited number of buses.

5:20 - Update from Transit Commission Members Work and New Business

1. Meetings and introductions with new City Council members

The Transit Commission has adopted a tradition of holding brief one-on-one meetings with each member of City Council. With the election of three new council members, the TC will review which points they wish to convey and assign members to coordinate the meetings.

2. New Transit Commission Members

The Transit Commission will evaluate upcoming commission openings.

3. New Transit Commission Member Training Program

The Transit Commission earlier this year implemented a new training program designed to help ease new members' transitions onto the board. The newest members will address their progress in completing the program's requirements, and the commission will assess its initial effectiveness

4. Volunteer program

Nearly half a dozen systems across the country have instituted "transit ambassador" programs, in which community members volunteer as greeters at the Transit Center. The commission will review a proposal for a similar program in Asheville.

5. Information releases and potential partnerships

In conjunction with its ongoing efforts to communicate better with riders, the commission will revisit the question of how information is shared with the public.

6. Transit Commission presentation schedule

The commission periodically invites various experts to address the commission on issues related to its work; members will consider potential speakers for future meetings.

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ASHEVILLE TRANSIT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Public Works Building Room A109

October 14, 2009 4:30-6:30

Attending:

Commission Members: Josh O'Conner, Dave Erb, Hanna Raskin, Andrew Goldberg, Tom Tomlin, J. Neal Jackson

Staff: Mariate Echeverry, Edna Johnson, Janet GeorgeMurr,

Community members: Tom Herman of NCDOT, Paul Van Heden, Heather Strassberg of MPO, Natalie Murdock, of Land of Sky, Dave Hastings, Joy Bartlett, Betty Jackson.

4:30pm: Hanna opened the meeting.

Agenda Amendments: None

Explanation of Public Comment Standards and Opportunities:

- Hanna – welcomed the public and read the standards of procedures regarding public comment.

September 9, 2009 Minutes Review: Under “Get There Asheville” replace the word “candidates” with “commission members.” Hanna moved to approve the minutes with the changes; Andrew second and all were in favor to approve minutes.

- Hanna announced Get There Asheville is hosting a forum on multi-modal transportation

Welcome Public – Introductions and Pre-Meeting Public Comment

- Hanna welcomed the public with an introduction of each member of Transit Commission, staff and public. At this time, Hanna asked the public for any pre-meeting comments and none was given.
- Introduction of the public:
 - Dave Hastings from CO and was on transportation committees. Suggested adding the name “Express” to the express routes; add electric bikes on Bike Plan; have Bike and Ride rather than Park and Ride. Paradigm to be revisited because one would still have to drive.
 - Joy Bartlett has ridden buses all over the country and she has a difficult time in Asheville in finding information. Hanna asked as new rider in Asheville where Ms. Bartlett could not locate the information. Joy would like to volunteer for the ambassador program.
 - Bette Jackson rode on the bus with Ms. Bartlett and lives car free. Ms. Jackson stated that Route 13 has had on-time performance problems. Ms. Jackson mentioned that another person called the Transit Center and was told that the bus was “on its way.” It is good that the Transit Center gives positive feedback but needs to give accurate information
 - Paul Van Heden – interested in community issues and encourages the public, staff, TC to attending Get There Asheville’s upcoming forum.

Update from Transit Commission Members Work and New Business:

- **Volunteer Day Program (Transit Ambassador Program) at Transit Center:**

Hanna stated that Assistant City Attorney, Martha McGlohon will be reviewing the proposal by Hanna. This item will be tabled for November TC meeting.

- **Get There Asheville** – Hanna announced early voting event on 10/30/09 at 5pm at Pritchard Park.
- **Transit System and International Community:** – Josh presented the Transit Commission members a written proposal from Geri Solomon who represents the international community. Mariate asked who would pay for the items listed in the proposal. Hanna mentioned that there are so many issues to deal with at this time. Andrew made a motion to help to deliver immediate opportunity to the community foundation and to help grassroots staff and outreach for the international community. Andrew continued to say that the Transit Commission recognizes Asheville's international community and he respects the proposal regarding frequency and timeliness. Not to dismiss this issue, but there are bigger issues. Josh mentioned that we get lost in the bigger issues. Josh continued to state that the concerns of Geri are significant to recognize. Josh would like to recognize the volunteer segment; minimal staff and money of the proposal. Hanna stated that Geri's proposal was useful and perhaps TC could meet with international staff. Josh stated that Geri is trying to bridge the gap in having information available in another language for the international community. Andrew acknowledges Josh and Geri's interest, but do not want staff business card size with key information available. . Josh indicated that Geri will print the business cards as an approach for the staff to assist the international community foundation. Mariate suggested affixing the cards to the maps with key information. Josh mentioned this would be helpful for the first time riders. Mariate asked why in other languages and not in English. Josh asked the TC members that he will ask Geri for specific information. Hanna stated to have specific and concrete information as to what Geri is requesting. Andrew mentioned that the proposal represents Geri, but not specific problems. Mariate mentioned that some information is not clear and it would be useful to research as to other transit systems have on international communities; and how they deal with these problems. Andrew agrees to have a chance to view the best practice resources. Josh did research other systems pursuing funding for bi-language by reprinting signage/maps; bus cards provide key codes as a temporary gap. Josh will bring other information. Mariate mentioned that it would be better to have maps rather than stickers. Edna suggested that with new schedules/routes would be the best time to incorporate the bi-language information. Josh, will continue to work with Geri. Hanna appreciates and recognizes Josh's hard work in preparing this proposal.

Transit Master Plan – to present to Council on October 27, 2009. Mariate stated that during the public comment period approximately 250 comments were received, most were positive. Main concerns were: Going inbound at the entrance of Goodwill, mainly due to most of the patrons are disabled; Black Mountain and Weaverville routes; not going into to the housing complexes; specifically in Pisgah View Apts; will go through Hillcrest b/c cannot turn around. HDR, consultant will be meeting with the Council members next week. Josh asked if Goodwill would be the only change. Mariate stated that Saturdays for Route 12 and stopping Route 4. Josh asked if there were any comments on Saturday removal and Mariate answered no. Even though Grove Park Inn (GPI) is part of the Passport Program, ridership is low. Tom Tomlin is requesting not to have Route 5 to GPI cut, since people work Monday-Saturday and will have to find another way to work; and eventually employees will not ride the bus Monday-Friday because of the cut and lose ridership. Tom mentioned that he sees that 94 to 100 patrons ride Route 5 on Saturdays. Mariate stated in order to get a balance, some routes had to be cut due to operational costs; Route 5 is a not productive route. Mariate answered Tom's question that the employees of GPI are aware that the City is cutting this route. Andrew stated that as TC we should attend Council on 10/27 to support the Transit Master Plan. Hanna encourages TC members to attend. Mariate announced that Transit Master Plan will be presented by HDR consultant and public comment after the consent agenda. After much discussion among the TC members, they passed a resolution to support the Transit Master Plan; 4 in favor and 2 opposed.

- **Transit Commission Presentation Schedule:** Hanna stated that she would like to have someone from the Health Department and Josh will send an email to request a presentation.

UPDATE FROM STAFF:

- **Status of Inter-City Routes:** Mariate announced that there will be a discussion about Route 54 during the next Council Meeting on 10/27/09. Presentation and public hearing on 10/22/09 from 5:30pm to 7pm in the Public Works Building. The main concern is Route 54 to Weaverville in which a proposal will be prepared for Council on 10/27/09 to review funding portions of Route 54. All legal notices have been published and on the website. Hanna will be attending on 10/22/09. Heather Strassberg of MPO/Land of Sky asked if Mariate coordinated this with Land of Sky. Mariate indicated that she is waiting for Council approval before informing the public.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Heather announced an MPO Transit meeting Friday 10/16/09, about projects and requests from NCDOT.
- Edna announced that the ATS is entering the Christmas parade and will have bus with a mountain scene.

November 18, 2009 Agenda Items:

- Implementation plan for Transit Master Plan (Mariate requested to move this agenda item to December for a more extensive plan which will be laid out)
- Volunteer/Ambassador Program
- Consolidation study

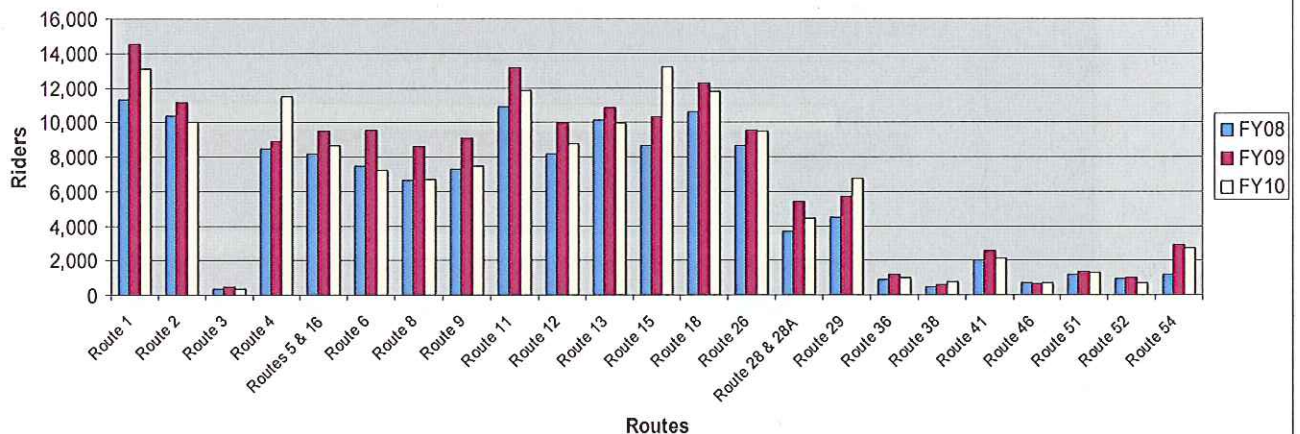
Route Ridership-October, 2009

Current Month

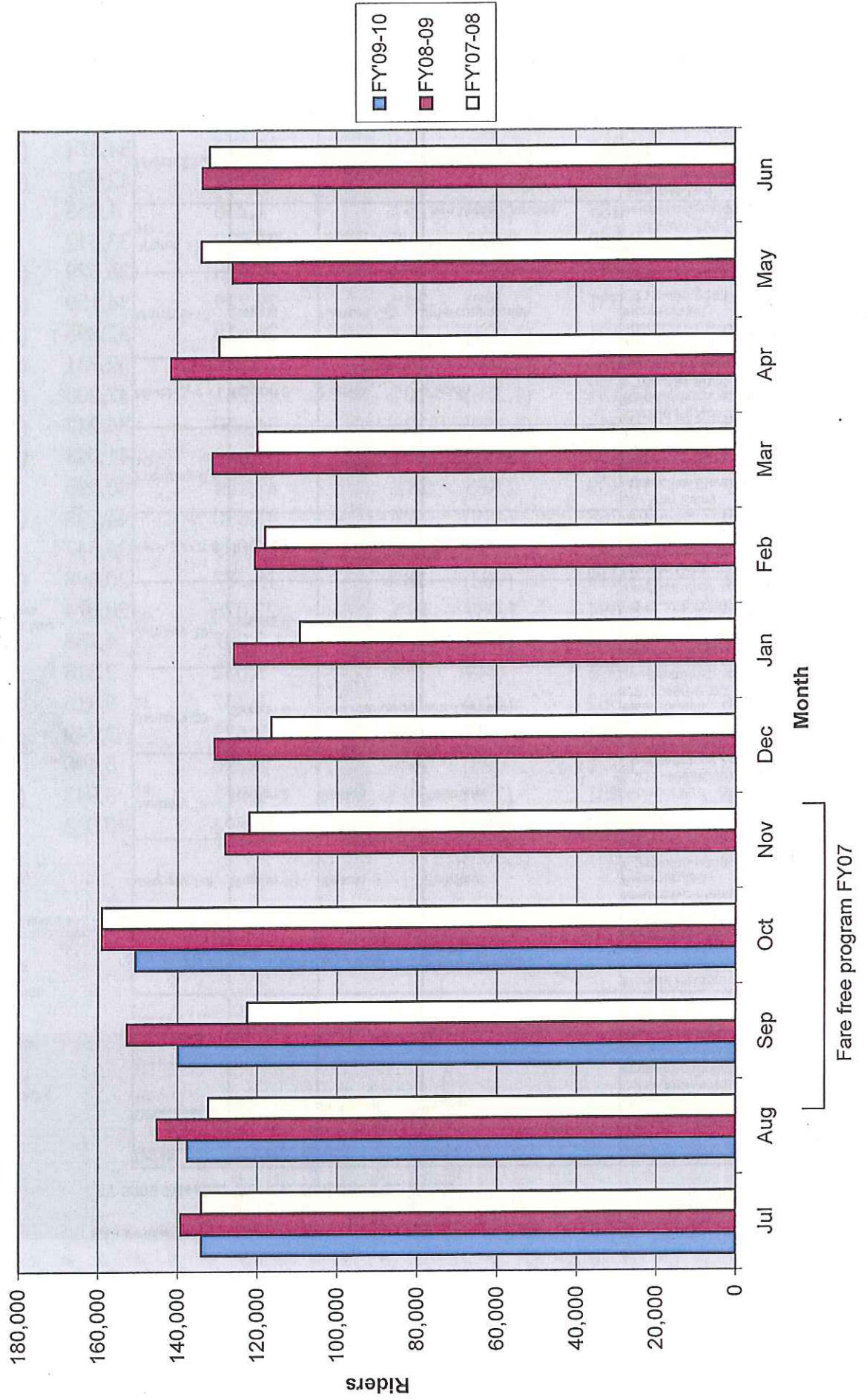
Fiscal Year to Date

Route	This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta		This Year	Last Year	Change	Delta	
1	13,089	14,507	(1,418)	-10%		50,812	54,374	(3,562)	-7%	
2	10,010	11,117	(1,107)	-10%		38,494	42,991	(4,497)	-10%	
3	364	488	(124)	-25%		1,236	1,955	(719)	-37%	
4	11,472	8,900	2,572	29%		34,830	33,442	1,388	4%	
5 & 16	8,635	9,494	(859)	-9%		34,428	36,679	(2,251)	-6%	
6	7,249	9,531	(2,282)	-24%		29,229	34,159	(4,930)	-14%	
8	6,700	8,601	(1,901)	-22%		26,618	32,895	(6,277)	-19%	
9	7,475	9,062	(1,587)	-18%		29,073	32,731	(3,658)	-11%	
11	11,875	13,151	(1,276)	-10%		43,781	47,205	(3,424)	-7%	
12	8,788	9,947	(1,159)	-12%		34,650	36,247	(1,597)	-4%	
13	9,953	10,852	(899)	-8%		37,583	41,028	(3,445)	-8%	
15	13,197	10,309	2,888	28%		43,154	40,295	2,859	7%	
18	11,819	12,268	(449)	-4%		43,530	44,733	(1,203)	-3%	
26	9,476	9,532	(56)	-1%		36,009	36,547	(538)	-1%	
28&28A	4,451	5,419	(968)	-18%		18,787	20,398	(1,611)	-8%	
29	6,783	5,694	1,089	19%		22,076	20,974	1,102	5%	
36	992	1,167	(175)	-15%		3,997	4,758	(761)	-16%	
38	747	598	149	25%		3,032	2,318	714	31%	
41	2,146	2,562	(416)	-16%		9,337	9,916	(579)	-6%	
46	689	651	38	6%		2,673	3,249	(576)	-18%	
51	1,292	1,371	(79)	-6%		5,296	5,490	(194)	-4%	
52	686	981	(295)	-30%		2,771	3,943	(1,172)	-30%	
54	2,698	2,889	(191)	-7%		10,824	10,033	791	8%	
Total	150,586	159,091	(8,505)							

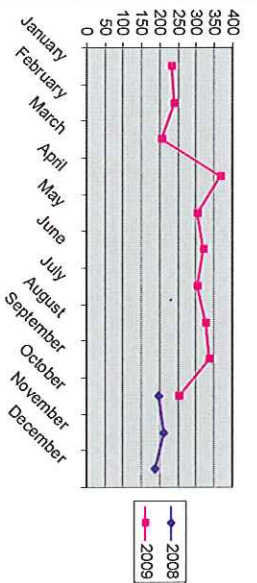
Route Comparison October FY09-10



Ridership Comparison

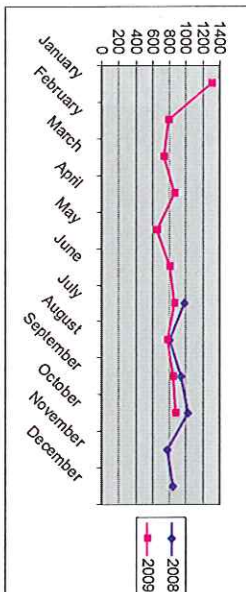


Buncombe County



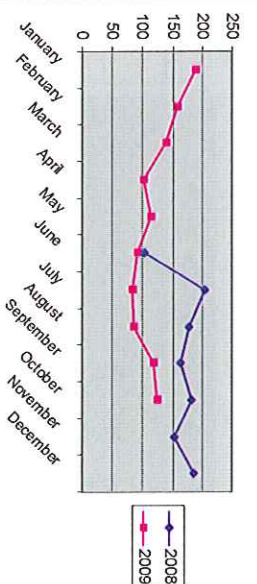
Buncombe County	2008	2009
January	231	236
February	236	204
March	204	366
April	366	302
May	302	319
June	319	301
July	301	324
August	324	334
September	334	251
October	251	195
November	195	209
December	209	187
Year Totals	591	2868
Overall Totals	3459	6327

City of Asheville

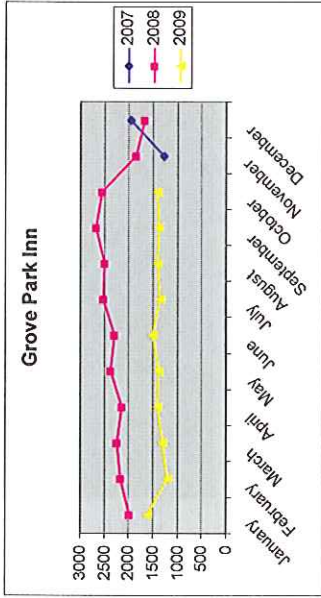


City of Asheville	2008	2009
January	1306	779
February	779	733
March	733	850
April	850	643
May	643	793
June	793	857
July	857	774
August	774	844
September	844	873
October	873	770
November	770	835
December	835	8452
Year Totals	5336	8452
Overall Totals	13788	22240

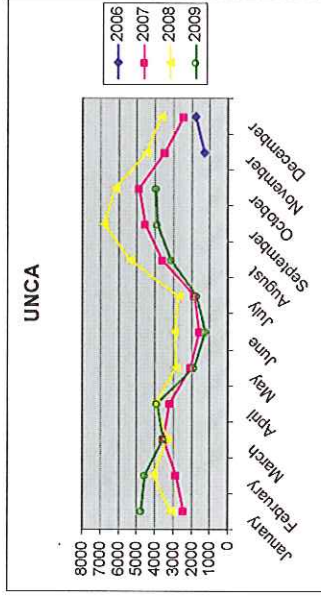
Greenlife Groceries



Greenlife	2008	2009
January	188	156
February	156	138
March	138	101
April	101	113
May	113	90
June	90	82
July	82	84
August	84	117
September	117	125
October	125	152
November	152	185
December	185	1194
Year Totals	1167	1194
Overall Totals	2361	3555



Grove Park Inn	2007	2008	2009
January		1993	1592
February		2156	1198
March		2225	1305
April		2128	1386
May		2356	1366
June		2298	1509
July		2520	1345
August		2494	1387
September		2659	1376
October		2552	1410
November	1268	1863	
December	1969	1676	
Year Totals	3237	26920	13874
Overall Totals	30157	57077	70951



UNCA	2006	2007	2008	2009
January		2433	3140	4777
February		2860	4041	4562
March		3536	3346	3554
April		3163	3906	3891
May		2010	2870	1803
June		1529	2882	1253
July		1816	2692	1677
August		3611	5336	3118
September		4512	6755	3897
October		4881	6169	3935
November	1285	3452	4444	
December	1754	2443	3649	
Year Totals	3039	36246	49230	32467
Overall Totals	120982			

FROM MARTHA MCGLOHON: *A proposal or plan should be prepared setting forth the purpose of the Transit Ambassador Program, how ambassadors will be selected, what the ambassadors will be expected to do, how many ambassadors will be expected to work at any one time, the number of hours anticipated, the specific location where the work is to be performed, why the proposed work cannot be performed by existing transit personnel, the type of training involved, who will perform the training, whether there will be a waiver of liability; etc.*

PURPOSE

To create a friendly, welcoming atmosphere at the Transit Center that makes bus riding a more attractive and manageable transportation option for Asheville residents.

AMBASSADOR SELECTION

While Transit Ambassador applications will be accepted on an ongoing basis, a new class of ambassadors will be appointed only twice each year to facilitate the training process. An application will consist of a resume, three references and answers to basic questions such as "Why do you want to be a transit ambassador?" Applicants must have no criminal history, and should be regular bus riders.

TRAINING

Transit Ambassadors will attend a three-hour class. The session's first hour will focus on the bus system; route structure and rules and regulations. The second hour will address customer service, and include a number of role-playing exercises. The final hour will be devoted to the ambassadors' duties and logistics governing their service. Training will be conducted by Transit staff and representatives from the Buncombe County Mediation Center.

EXPECTATIONS

Transit Ambassadors will be conversant in the current route schedule and bus rules. They will be stationed at the Transit Center to field questions from riders, accept feedback, pick up litter and alert the dispatcher to any potentially dangerous behavior. Ambassadors will be in constant communication with the dispatcher so they will be able to provide riders with the most current information concerning route delays. The Transit Ambassadors' most important job is supporting their fellow riders.

SCHEDULING

Transit Ambassadors will complete no fewer than two three-hour shifts at the Transit Center each month, in addition to a single two-hour bus-riding shift. To maximize coverage, ambassadors will work alone, unless special circumstances dictate otherwise. Ambassadors will also complete paperwork after each shift, creating a record of any feedback they received while volunteering. Finally, ambassadors will attend a quarterly meeting conducted by a member of the Transit Commission. Ambassadors should plan on committing at least ten hours each month to the volunteer program.

BENEFITS

Transit Ambassadors will receive an Asheville Transit vest to wear while working and a free 30-day bus pass. Additionally, ambassadors will be honored at an annual volunteer luncheon.

RALEIGH, NC

Mission	To offer assurance, experience, information and a friendly face to new passengers
Screening	Ambassadors should be regular riders, responsible and reliable
Training	1.5 hour orientation session
Responsibilities	Assist new transit riders with questions
Expectations	Attend one quarterly meeting
Incentives	Free 30-day pass or a logo'd tote bag
	Accept feedback and convey it to transit staff
	Assist at one community event every six months

ALEXANDRIA, VA

Mission	To encourage and assist others to make the choice to stop driving alone
Screening	None
Training	None
Responsibilities	Representing the city at festivals and fairs
Expectations	None
Incentives	Trader Joe's gift cards

<http://alexandriava.gov/localmotion/info/default.aspx?id=11992>

DURHAM, NC

Mission	To enhance transit service delivery through passenger recommendations
Screening	Essay
Training	None
Responsibilities	Attend monthly meetings
Expectations	None
Incentives	None

http://www.durhamnc.gov/forms/data_pride_app.pdf

MARICOPA, AZ

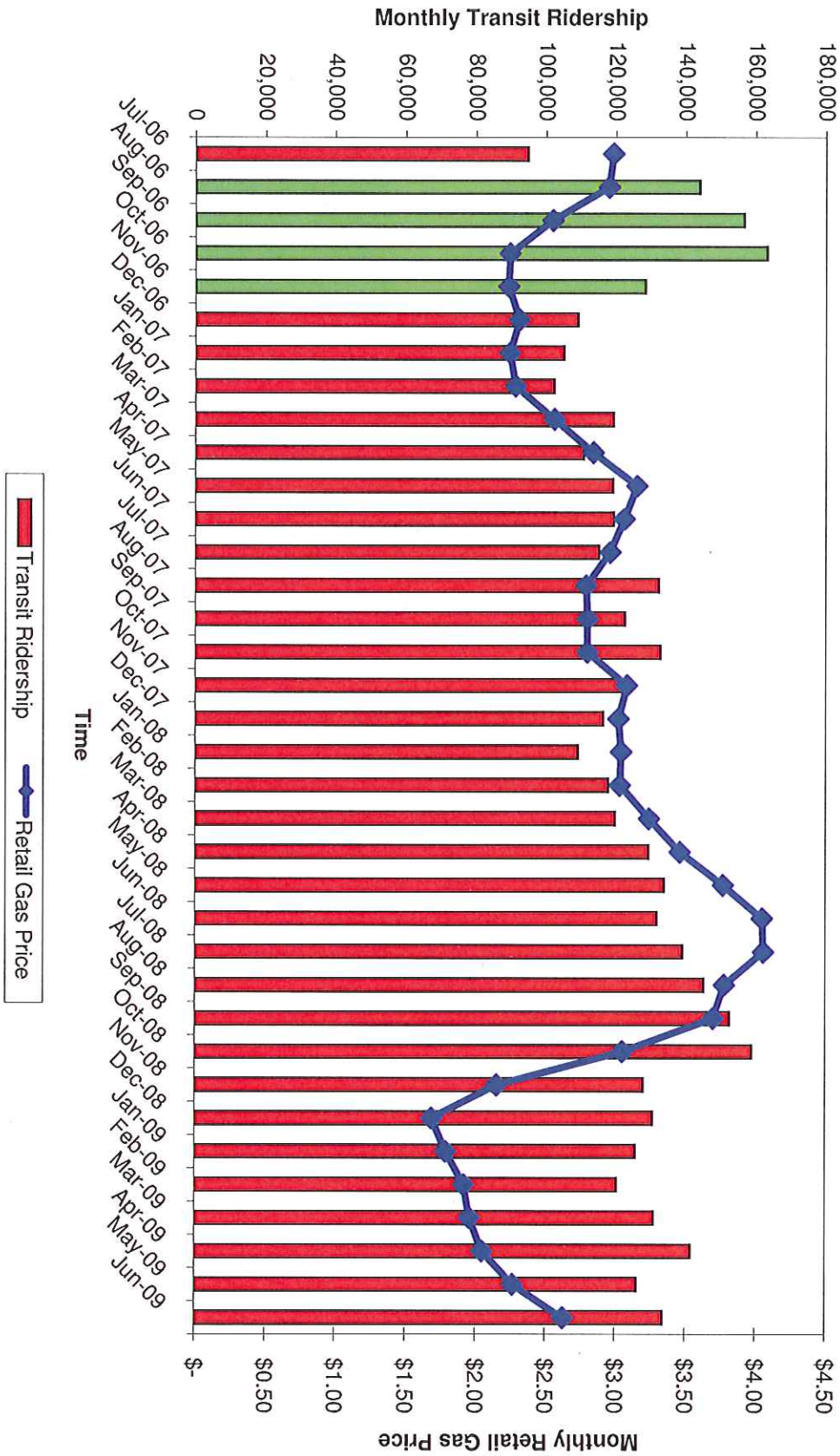
Mission	To create a network of people trained about the most current resources and strategies to empower all people to move more easily throughout the region
Screening	None
Training	None
Responsibilities	Attend quarterly meetings
Expectations	Share information gleaned from meetings
Incentives	Networking opportunities

http://www.mag.maricopa.gov/pdf/cms_resource/HS_2008_Ambassador-Pgm-Participant-Information-Sheet37688.pdf

ROSEVILLE, CA

Mission	To offer assurance, experience, information and a friendly face to new passengers
Screening	Personal interview
Training	Classroom training (4 hr.) / Hands-on training (2 hr.)
Responsibilities	Answer questions
Expectations	Wear vest, visor or name tag at all times
Incentives	Certificate of completion
	Emphasis on customer service
	Help at least 10 passengers/year plan their trips
	Transit Center duty (5 hrs) / Bus riding duty (3 hrs) each month
	Two luncheons/year

Asheville Transit System Transit Ridership Compared To Retail Gas Price FY 2006-07 - FY 2008-09



November 18, 2009

NOVEMBER 18, 2007

4th Floor Training Room – Fire/Police Station

[illegible]

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Transit Commission Meeting
November 18, 2009
4th Floor Training Room Police and Fire

Name	Address	Email	Phone Number
Dave ERS	P.O. Box 8694 Asheville, NC 28814	DAVE@EBC-HARTER.NET	(828) 251-8289
Andrew Goldbery	—	—	—
Karen Austin	on File	on File	on File
HANNA PASKIN	on file		
JOSH O'CONNOR	584 Fairview Rd Asheville NC 28843	josh.oconnor@gmail.com	828 581-4648
Tom Tomlin	61 Edwina Pl 28801	TomTomlin39@aol.com	828 254-9950
Hank Edgery	COA		828-2324525

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